

## CANADA.

SIR CHARLES MONTGOMERY is pursuing an enlightened policy by liberally cultivating the arts of peace. In his speech on the 28th Sept., on opening the Canadian Parliament, he adverts to the necessity of laying down and forming good lines of roads, and improving the prisons, so as to render them not so much places of punishment (especially for untried prisoners), as of detention and safe custody. "Justice, due even to criminals," he says, "requires that they should not be subjected to greater punishment than what is designed by their sentence, and that disease, or death, from foul air and want of exercise should not be superadded to imprisonment." Thus we see that, as it was ever, though upon more humane principles we must confess, the maxim, "*experimentum in corpore vile*," still obtains in our days; that is to say, the public health, or measures for securing it, are first tried and perfected in prisons and places of restraint.

## DOUBLE SPIRAL STAIRCASES.

AN ingenious invention is here shown of a double spiral staircase, such as is now being produced at the manufactory in Berners-street, Commercial-road; it is extremely simple, and the object, as will be perceived, is to provide for ascent and descent without chance of meeting or collision. Our carpenter friends will be much interested in the description and drawings, for which purpose we insert them. A deal or other board of suitable thickness, 6 feet long and 12 inches wide, forms a double tread, and the riser crosses, as it were, from corner to corner, except as arranged to form a *newel* in the centre of about 5 inches in diameter. As applicable for crowded shops, public dining and coffee rooms, for cabin stairs, railway stations, warehouses, &c., they may be found peculiarly suited, but they are not to be recommended for dwelling-houses. They are susceptible of being made most ornamental with inlaid and fancy woods, and of being decorated with drapery, choice balustrades, &c., or might be closed in with a screen-work, glazed or lighted from the top. It will repay a visit to inspect this ingenious production, and a card for that purpose may be obtained at the address, as above.



Stairs shown with drapery, or close dado.

## Correspondence.

## CHURCH ARCHITECTURE.

SIR,—The very talented and praiseworthy manner in which your journal has been conducted since its commencement, and the zealous and spirited endeavours you have made to call forth every feeling which could lead to the advancement of the noblest of the fine arts, has induced me to trouble you with a few remarks upon the subject; and I am more particularly resolved to do so, from a conversation I accidentally heard, a few days ago, between two travellers with whom I happened to journey for a few miles inside a stage-coach in this county. In the course of our journey, we happened to pass a rather handsome church, rendered more imposing, perhaps, from the commanding eminence on which it stood; it is, in fact, one of Charles Barry's earlier productions, and though possessing considerable interest to the general spectator, still is not such a structure as an architect would expect from the author of the Westminster Palace. Opposite to me in the coach sat two gentlemen, one of whom remarked to the other on passing the church,

"That is a very handsome church, Sir."

"Yes," was the reply; "don't you think it is a great deal too good for a country-place like this?"

"I quite agree with you," returned the first speaker; "the Lancashire people spend too much money on their churches and similar buildings. I know a town a little distance from here, which has two churches in it, really splendid, and have been erected at a great cost, one, I believe, more than 20,000*l.*; I think they are quite out of character with the place; if it had been Bath or Cheltenham, they would have been quite sufficient, and even then I think it is a great waste of money on a church, because a plainer building would answer the purpose equally well."

Now, Mr. Editor, a great deal has been said, and more has been written, upon the subject of the degeneracy of architecture during the last century or more, and many have been the causes ascribed for its decline; architects have come in for their share of abuse (and deservedly, too), but it seems to

me there is another and a more powerful reason than the apparent want of talent in the profession, and that is the absence of public sympathy with the art; the want of the *cultivation* of that feeling for the beautiful which is more or less implanted in every breast; there is too much utilitarianism for architecture to nourish, though I do rejoice to think it is in some measure giving way to a more intellectual and liberal spirit; that it does yet exist, and to a very great extent, the conversation given above, and others of a similar kind which we may hear in any day's ride, too forcibly testify; and how, I ask, is this markishness, this sickly insensibility, to be overcome? How are we, the architects of Great Britain, to obtain that patronage which is ours by reason and by right? In my humble opinion it must be effected by the active exertions of all who are really architects, and worthy the name, singly and en masse. All who would wish to behold architecture once more the glory, the pride, and the wonder of the land, all who would wish to see England's lovely valleys studded with the gems of a noble art; her eminences crowned—not with the warlike castles, as of old, but the manous and cottages of peace, erected in a spirit of pure and tasteful feeling, and deservedly claiming the admiration of every passer-by; every one who would that their native land should be thus adorned, must himself put a shoulder to the wheel. It is with the public, and not so much the profession, he must labour; he must begin at home, too, with his children, his relations, his friends, and the light will gradually break forth, like the golden beams of the sun, when they first disperse the mists of the morning.

Many talented and noble-minded individuals have by their writings laboured to awaken a kindred feeling in the nation; and I look upon papers like *THE BUILDER*, and others of a similar kind, as of the highest service to the cause of architecture; but without the co-operation of the profession generally, nay, almost universally, it is my firm conviction that neither private talent nor public journals can go beyond the foundation of the noble structure we would see raised in our land.

As I have before remarked, there are encouraging symptoms that architecture is making some endeavours to attain her original splendour; we have seen at length that those high in the councils of the nation have agreed that something must be done, and long may that sovereign and that minister live, who have given to Genius the power, unshackled and unfettered, to produce a structure worthy the seat of legislation in this great country, and one which will remain a standing monument to future ages of the genius of man, the glory of the nation, and the boast of the age in which it arose.

It was my intention to have said a few words respecting your paper, but I have already intruded too long on your columns; if, however, it should meet your views, I will in a short time speak to you again. At present let me merely add that the first number of *THE BUILDER* happened by some chance to find its way to the place in which I reside, and since its first appearance I watched it with an earnest and hopeful feeling that it would do something for a cause too long and grievously neglected.

I am, Sir, yours most respectfully,

A VOICE FROM THE NORTH.

Lancashire, October 26th, 1843.

## BUILDING REGULATIONS BILL.

SIR,—As it is probable the Building Regulations Bill will again be introduced into Parliament in the ensuing Session, I would beg to suggest, through the medium of your widely-circulated journal, that the Bill should provide that in all trials on building questions (now very numerous), juries should be composed of practical men, by reason of the intricacy and technicality of the matters usually in question.

I am induced to make this suggestion from being present at a trial which took place in the Court of Common Pleas, Guildhall, in December last (*Price v. Seeley*), which was an action charging the defendant with procuring two journeyman bricklayers, named Winny and Lee, to maliciously indict the plaintiff, without any reasonable or probable cause, falsely accusing him of assaulting them.

From the evidence it appeared that these bricklayers had commenced building a nine-inch fence wall upon an old foundation end wall of a house which had been pulled down belonging to the plaintiff, abutting a yard of some premises which had been purchased by the trustees for rebuilding St. Dunstan's Church, Fleet-street, of which trustees the defendant was one. The plaintiff expostulated with Mr. Seeley and his co-trustees who were present, and on their persisting in proceeding, and refusing even to await the arrival of the plaintiff's surveyor, the plaintiff locked the new-laid bricks down with his feet.

The Chief Justice repeatedly interrupted the counsel and witnesses on both sides in speaking of the legality of the building and the propriety of the wall, saying that these were not put in issue. A



Stairs shown—open work.